

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

Admiral Karl L. Schultz  
Commandant of the Coast Guard  
2701 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20593

December 20, 2019

Dear Admiral Schultz,

We are writing to address the recent fire that consumed a military housing unit on Fort Wadsworth, New York, and to request the rapid construction of replacement units so that military families on Staten Island and in South Brooklyn can find affordable housing in New York City.

As you are aware, in the afternoon of November 4<sup>th</sup>, a fire began at 442 USS Iowa Circle on Fort Wadsworth. This was a two-alarm fire, requiring over 100 firefighters to control and put out. Though the blaze only lasted an hour, the destruction was massive. While investigations into the cause of the fire are ongoing, the building was severely damaged and requires extensive repair. Eight families have been displaced, and while we trust that the Coast Guard will do its utmost to provide them with stable accommodations, it is imperative that Fort Wadsworth's housing units be able to continue providing a permanent home for these and other families.

Beyond the obligation to our service families to alleviate the burden they are facing, we are presented with a unique opportunity to modernize the facilities at Fort Wadsworth. These housing units can be rebuilt and modernized, allowing Fort Wadsworth to remain a key Coast Guard installation for the future. The Coast Guard's role in our national security means that Coast Guard families deserve the best when it comes to military housing, and we hope to work with you to ensure that they enjoy the best standards possible.

Fort Wadsworth's military housing provides an essential role within the national security posture of the northeast region. Fort Wadsworth provides some of the only military housing in New York City, offering affordable and convenient on-base accommodation in a city whose housing is otherwise unaffordable to the bulk of uniformed servicemembers. If Fort Wadsworth's military housing were to disappear, many servicemembers would face undue burdens just affording housing for their families while detailed to the various installations across New York City, negatively impacting not only our great city, but the Armed Services as well.

Given the incredibly important role of Fort Wadsworth and the US Coast Guard Sector New York Headquarters located there to the physical and economic security of New York and the greater northeast, it is critical that Fort Wadsworth and its servicemembers function at its full capacity, something that requires high-quality and affordable housing within easy access.

We fully understand the financial constraints facing the Coast Guard, as well as the severe maintenance backlog the Coast Guard must complete. We are committed to working in a bi-cameral and bi-partisan way to provide the Coast Guard with the resources needed to fully execute its mission, including the vital need to provide affordable housing to its members in high-priced areas like New York. And we intend on fighting for an increase in funding for Coast Guard facilities in the upcoming fiscal year, so that the Coast Guard can address the facility needs at Fort Wadsworth and around the country.

We look forward to working with you to get this important project done.

Sincerely,

		
Max Rose Member of Congress	Kirsten Gillibrand United States Senator	Charles E. Schumer United States Senator